



Fact Sheet

Water Use Efficiency Rule

Planning Requirements

Background

One of the three elements of the proposed draft rule is water use efficiency planning. Water use efficiency has been an important component of water system planning for over 10 years and has been used to assist water systems in developing drinking water supply strategies. The Washington State Legislature recognized this and required the Department of Health (DOH) to use its existing guidance as a starting point for writing enforceable water use efficiency planning requirements, which would be incorporated into DOH's existing planning program.

Water Use Efficiency Rule Schedule

July 2006 – Mail proposed rule

August 2006 – Public hearings

August to September 2006 – Review formal comments & finalize rule

September 2006 – Adopt rule

October 2006 – Effective date

The proposed water use efficiency planning requirements focus on:

- Data collection and reporting.
- Demand forecasting.
- Evaluation and selection of water use efficiency measures.

Data Collection and Reporting

Understanding a municipal water supplier's impact on the water supply is important for making informed water resource decisions. The proposed draft rule would require municipal water suppliers to provide a report about their water source and supply characteristics (such as instream flows, salt water intrusion, and aquifer depletion).

Municipal water suppliers need data to develop a successful water use efficiency program. By understanding how much water is used, where it goes, and who is served, a municipal water supplier can make educated choices about how best to conserve water. Under the proposed draft rule, municipal water suppliers would need to collect consumption and production data on a regular basis and report that information in their planning document and annual performance report (see Fact Sheet, *Goal-Setting and Performance Reporting*, DOH PUB 331-305).

Demand Forecasting

Demand forecasting is important because it identifies how much water will be needed in the future. The proposed draft rule says, that as part of their planning documents, municipal water



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suppliers must forecast their anticipated total water demand. The forecast needs to address local population growth projections, land use plans, and zoning ordinances. In preparing the forecast, the municipal water supplier must consider existing water usage patterns and water use efficiency goals.

Evaluation and Selection of Water Use Efficiency Measures

The proposed draft rule would give municipal water suppliers flexibility in selecting what measures they would implement to meet their water use efficiency goals.

Water Use Efficiency Measures

Municipal water suppliers would need to evaluate or implement a specified number of water use efficiency measures based on water system size. There are six different size categories; the larger the water system, the more measures required.

There are specific water use efficiency measures that would need to be evaluated or implemented. All municipal water suppliers would be required to install source meters and service meters, and determine their leakage (see Fact Sheets, *Distribution Leakage Standards*, DOH PUB 331-304, and *Metering Requirements*, DOH PUB 331-306). All municipal water suppliers would be required to evaluate the feasibility of implementing rates that encourage water use efficiency. Water systems with 1,000 or more connections would also be required to evaluate water reclamation options.

Cost-Effective Evaluation

The proposed draft rule would require municipal water suppliers to evaluate or implement a specified number of water use efficiency measures. This evaluation would not be required if a municipal water supplier planned to implement the specified number of water use efficiency measures for its water system size. Municipal water suppliers with fewer than 1,000 connections would need to describe how they evaluated their water use efficiency measures. Municipal water suppliers with 1,000 or more connections would need to complete their evaluation following criteria laid out in the proposed draft rule and address the societal costs and benefits of the water use efficiency measures.

For More Information

If you have comments or questions about the proposed draft rule, please contact:

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Additional information can be found on the Web at:

http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/municipal_water/municipal_water_law.htm